

Message Text

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15

ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 INR-07 NSAE-00 PA-02 RSC-01

USIA-15 PRS-01 SP-02 /039 W

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P 110715Z DEC 74

FM AMEMBASSY JIDDA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 9537

AMEMBASSY BEIRUT PRIORITY

UNCLAS JIDDA 7271

E.O.: 11652: N/A

TAGS: OTRA, SA

SUBJ: VISIT OF TIME CORRESPONDENT

1. IN SUPPORT OF APPROACH ALREADY MADE BY PUBLIC AFFAIRS
COUNSELOR RUGGIERO TO MINISTRY OF INFORMATION ON BEHALF
OF VISA FOR KARSTEN PRAGER, AMBASSADOR ON DECEMBER 9 REQUESTED
MEETING WITH ACTING MINISTER OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS
MOHAMMAD MAS'UD. AMBASSADOR WAS TOLD MAS'UD WAS IN RIYADH
AND WOULD NOT RETURN UNTIL NIGHT OF DECEMBER 10 OR SOME TIME
ON THE 11TH. MFA WILL CALL US AS SOON AS A MEETING CAN BE
ESTABLISHED.

2. ON MORNING OF DECEMBER 10, HOWEVER, DIRECTOR GENERAL OF
PRESS AFFAIRS IN MINISTRY OF INFORMATION INFORMED USIS THAT
COUNCIL OF MINISTERS HAS DECIDED TIME BEIRUT BUREAU CHIEF
KARSTEN PRAGER SHOULD NOT RPT NOT BE ISSUED A VISA UNTIL AFTER
THE HAJ (NOT EARLIER THAN DECEMBER 30). MINISTRY OF INFORMATION
SAID IT HAS CABLED SAUDI EMBASSY BEIRUT NOT RPT NOT TO ISSUE
PRAGER VISA UNTIL THEN. (DIRECTOR GENERAL SAYS ROYAL DIWAN HAS
TOLD MINISTRY OF INFORMATION NOT RPT NOT TO ISSUE VISAS TO ANY
JOURNALISTS UNTIL AFTER HAJ, AND THAT THIS NOTIFICATION IS
BEING RELAYED TO ALL SAUDI EMBASSIES.)

3. AMBASSADOR STILL PLANS TO SPEAK TO MAS'UD ON BEHALF OF
PRAGER (AND ALSO OTHER TIME REPS STEWART, SWEENEY, AND KAPNER)
BUT NOW THAT COUNCIL OF MINISTERS HAS MADE A DECISION, WE
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ARE NOT OPTIMISTIC IT CAN BE REVERSED. WITH AN EXPECTED RECORD

MILLION AND ONE HALF HAJIS (AND SCORES OF ISLAMIC VIP'S)
POURING THROUGH JIDDA ON THEIR WAY TO MECCA THIS YEAR, THE
PRESSURES ON THE COURT ARE SO GREAT AS ALMOST TO PRECLUDE ITS
CONSIDERING ANY OTHER FACTORS.

AKINS

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